

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 ROME 02581 171939Z

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ROME 2581

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SUBJ: FORLANI OPENS PRE-CONGRESS DEBATE IN DC

SUMMARY: SPEECH BY DEFMIN FORLANI TO MARCH DC REGIONAL CONGRESS CRITICIZED ATTEMPT (BY DC LEFT) TO SIMPLIFY TERMS OF INTERNAL PARTY DEBATE INTO CONTEST BETWEEN PROGRESSIVES FAVORING RENEWAL AND CONSERVATIVES OPPOSING IT. FORLANI CALLED FOR STRONG, UNITED DC AS PREREQUISITE TO REAL RENEWAL AIMED AT DEVELOPING CLEAR POLICY LINE TRUE TO DC TRADITIONS. FORLANI WARNED AGAINST "CHASING" PSI IN HOPES OF TACTICAL ACCORD AND STRONGLY OPPOSED HISTORIC COMPROMISE WITH PCI. SPPEECH DREW SHARP CRITICISM FROM SEVERAL DC LEFT FACTION LEADERS (GALLONI, GRANELLI) AND PRAISE FROM CENTRISTS LIKE PICCOLI. COMING AFTER LONG SILENCE, FORLANI SPEECH CONSTITUTES OPENING GUN IN DC PRE-CONGRESS DEBATE AND AGAIN PUTS HIM INTO RUNNING TO REPLACE ZACCAGNINI AT DC NATIONAL CONGRESS NOW SCHEDULED FOR MARCH 19-22. END SUMMARY.

1. IN FEBRUARY 14 SPEECH TO CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY CONGRESS IN MARCHE REGION, DEFMIN FORLANI DENOUNCED "SIMPLISTIC" AND "EMOTIONAL" EFFORTS AT DC RENEWAL BASED ON "SUMMARY FUDGMENTS" (AGAINST SOME PARTY LEADERS) AND ARTIFICIAL DIVISION OF PARTY INTO "PROGRESSIVES" AND "CONSERVATIVES." THE DC, HE SAID, MUST PURSUE " AN EFFICIENT AND RESOLUTE POLICY IN DEFENSE OF LIBERTY, PROGRESS

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 ROME 02581 171939Z

AND ORDER." "A STRONG AND UNITED DC" IS THE INDISPENSIBLE

CONDITION FOR RENEWAL OF THE PARTY.

2. COMMENTING ON RELATIONS WITH THE SOCIALISTS (PSI), FORLANI CAUTIONED THAT BEST METHOD TO REACH "SERIOUS AND LASTING COLLABORATION" WITH PSI IS NOT TO "CHASE" THEM. RATHER, THE DC MUST REMAIN TRUE TO ITS IDEALS AND "VOCATION" AND SEEK ACCORDS WITH OTHER PARTIES, AND "PARTICULARLY" THE SOCIALISTS, NOT BASED ON TACTICAL AND OPPORTUNISTIC CONSIDERATIONS.

3. FORLANI CAME DOWN HARD ON THE COMMUNISTS (PCI) AND THEIR EFFORTS "TO DEMONSTRATE THE UNGOVERNABILITY OF THE COUNTRY WITHOUT THEIR PARTICIPATION IN THE GOVERNMENT." HE WARNED THAT DC "DIALOGUE (CONFRONTO) WITH THE COMMUNIST PARTY, IF CARRIED OUT LIKE WEAK PENITENTS IN DISORDERED RANKS, BECOMES AN LAIBI FOR SURRENDER." DIALOGUE HAS A MEANING TO EXTENT THAT DC WORKS FOR VICTORY OF DEMOCRACY OVER TOTALITARIAN SYSTEMS. "IF INSTEAD, FATALISTICALLY ACCEPTING OUR DECLINE, WE (DC) THINK AT THE END TO POSE SOME CONDITIONS OR TO ASK CERTAIN GUARANTEES OF (PCI FOR) GOOD TREATMENT, THIS IS NOT DIALOGUE, BUT WILLINGNESS TO CAPITULATE AND THE ILLUSION OF REFUGE IN IMPRISONMENT."

4. FORLANI DID NOT DIRECTLY CRITICIZE DC SECRETARY ZACCAGNINI AND EMPHASIZED THAT HE AND MANY OTHERS IN PARTY HAD NEVER INTENDED ZACCAGNINI'S MANDATE TO BE A "LIMITED" ONE. RATHER, ZACCAGNINI HAS BEEN ENCOURAGED, HE SAID, TO CARRY OUT HIS MANDATE "FULLY AND RESPONSIBLY." FORLANI CALLED FOR PARTY TO UNITE AROUND ITS "ELECTED SECRETARY" IN ORDER TO CARRY OUT THE NECESSARY RENEWAL.

5. DESPITE LACK OF OPEN CRITICISM OF DC SECRETARY, FORLANI'S SPEECH INDICATES HIS WILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT A DRAFT AT DC CONGRESS IN EVENT A MAJORITY FINDS ZACCAGNINI'S LEADERSHIP HAS NOT MEASURED UP TO STANDARDS FORLANI SET FORTH. IN ADDITION, THE PORTION OF THE SPEECH WARNING AGAINST "CHASING" THE PSI AND AGAINST "FATALISM" IN RELATIONS WITH THE COMMUNISTS IN A CLEAR REBUKE TO ELEMENTS ON DC LEFT WING AROUND ZACCAGNINI (LIKE GALLONI) WHOSE ATTITUDE TOWARD THE COMMUNISTS IS CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 ROME 02581 171939Z

EQUIVOCAL.

6. FORLANI'S SORTIE PREDICTABLY STIRRED UP A HORNETS' NEST ON LEFT OF DC PARTY AND ELICITED CRITICISM FROM BOTH COMMUNISTS AND PSI. FONAFF UNDERSECRETARY GRANELLI (LEFT WING BASE FACTION) CRITICIZED FORLANI FOR HAVING BECOME A "COLLECTING POINT OF ALL THE INTERNAL OPPOSITION TO A PROCESS OF MORAL AND POLITICAL RENEWAL WHICH

THE DC HAS JUST BEGUN." DC VICE SECRETARY GALLONI, OF THE SAME FACTION, CALLED FOR DC COLLABORATION WITH THE POLITICAL FORCES "GRAVITATING IN THE SOCIALIST AREA (I.E., INCLUDING THE PCI) AND WARNED AGAINST IDEOLOGICAL "CONFRONTATIONS" WHICH WOULD IMPEDE THE SEARCH FOR A "MORE HOMOGENEOUS POLITICAL AND CULTURAL NATIONAL UNITY." SEVERAL MORO FACTION LEADERS ALSO EXPRESSED DISSENT WITH FORLANI'S REMARKS AND IMPLIED THAT HE WAS NOT THERE-BY HELPING CAUSE OF DC RENEWAL. MURMERINGS HAVE ALSO BEEN HEARD FROM SOME MORE OR LESS PRO-FORLANI DC SOURCES IN THE MARCH REGION WHO FELT THAT FORLANI SPEECH TO CRITICAL OF ZACCAGNINI LINE.

7. PREDICTABLY, FORLANI RECEIVED STRONG PUBLIC SUPPORT FROM CENTRIST FACTION LEADER PICCOLI AND FROM INDIVIDUAL DC LEADERS CLOSE TO ANDREOTTI, COLOMBO AND THE (NOW DIVIDED) FANFANI-FORLANI FACTION. INDIVIDUAL SOCIAL DEMOCRAT AND LIBERAL PARTY LEADERS ALSO PRAISED FORLANI STAND.

8. COMMENT: FORLANI SUPPORTERS HAVE BEEN PERPLEXED AND DISTURBED BY HIS PREVIOUS RETICENCE IN TAKING A PUBLIC STAND UPON WHICH THEY COULD BASE AN EFFORT TO BRING HIM IN AS PARTY SECRETARY. AS LATE AS LAST NOVEMBER, WE BELIEVE, HE COULD HAVE HAD THE SECRETARY SHIP (AT DC NATIONAL COUNCIL) IF HE HAD BEEN WILLING TO MAKE A BID TO OUST ZACCAGNINI DRAWING ON SUPPORT-WITH-STRINGS FROM CENTRIST FACTION LEADERS LIKE PICCOLI AND ANDREOTTI

INSTEAD, PERHAPS HOPING FOR A DRAFT AT THE CONGRESS WHICH WOULD NOT LEAVE HIM TOO BEHOLDEN TO OLD GUARD, FORLANI REMAINED SILENT AND HIS STOCK AS POTENTIAL SUCCESSOR TO ZACCAGNINI WEAKENED ACCORDINGLY. HIS RECENT SPEECH PUTS HIM BACK INTO THE RUNNING, BUT WITH A LOT OF CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 04 ROME 02581 171939Z

GROUND TO BE MADE UP. SOME OF HIS POTENTIAL SUPPORTERS MAY HAVE ALREADY OPTED FOR ZACCAGNINI AND FORLANI HIMSELF WOULD NO DOUBT SUPPORT "ZAC'S" RE-ELECTION IF THE LATTER MOVED FURTHER TOWARD A "CENTRIST" LINE AND WERE CONDITIONED BY A WIDER MAJORITY WITHIN THE PARTY. HOWEVER, SHARP REACTION BY ELEMENTS FO DC LEFT TO HIS SPEECH INDICATES THAT PRE-CONGRESS DEBATE STARTING IN EARNEST AND THAT DIVISIONS WITHIN PARTY ON BASIC POLICY (ESPECIALLY TOWARD PCI) WILL MAKE DC UNITY CALLED FOR BY FORLANI DIFFICULT TO ATTAIN. VOLPE

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